NUMB. CII.

The SPECTATOR.

——Luſus animo debent aliquando dari,
Ad cogitandum melior ut redeat ſibi. Phædr.

Wedneſday, June 27. 1711.

I Do not know whether to call the following Letter a Satyr upon Coquets, or a Repreſentation of their ſeveral fantaſtical Accompliſhments, or what other Title to give it; but as it is, I ſhall communicate it to the Publick. It will ſufficiently explain its own Intentions, ſo that I ſhall preſent it my Reader at length without either Preface or Poſtſcript.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

'WOmen are armed with Fans as Men with 'Swords, and ſometimes do more Execution with them: To the End therefore that Ladies 'may be entire Miſtreſſes of the Weapon which 'they bear, I have erected an Academy for the 'training up of young Women in the *Exerciſe of 'the Fan*, according to the moſt faſhionable Airs 'and Motions that are now practiſed at Court. 'The Ladies who *carry* Fans under me are drawn 'up twice a Day in my great Hall, where they 'are inſtructed in the Uſe of their Arms, and *exerciſed* by the following Words of Command,

Handle your Fans,
Unfurl your Fans,
Diſcharge your Fans,
Ground your Fans,
Recover your Fans,
Flutter your Fans.

'By the right Obſervation of theſe few plain 'Words of Command, a Woman of a tolerable 'Genius that will apply her ſelf diligently to her 'Exerciſe for the Space of but one half Year, ſhall 'be able to give her Fan all the Graces that can 'poſſibly enter into that little modiſh Machine.

'But to the End that my Readers may form to 'themſelves a right Notion of this *Exerciſe*, I beg 'Leave to explain it to them in all its Parts. When 'my female Regiment is drawn up in Array with 'every one her Weapon in her Hand, upon my 'giving the Word to *handle their Fans*, each of 'them ſhakes her Fan at me with a Smile, then 'gives her Right-hand Woman a Tap upon the 'Shoulder, then preſſes her Lips with the Extre-'mity of her Fan, then lets her Arms fall in an ea-'ſy Motion, and ſtands in a Readineſs to receive 'the next Word of Command. All this is done 'with a cloſe Fan, and is generally learned in the 'firſt Week.

'The next Motion is that of *unfurling the Fan*, 'in which is comprehended ſeveral little Flirts and 'Vibrations, as alſo gradual and deliberate Open-'ings, with many voluntary Fallings aſunder in 'the Fan it ſelf, that are ſeldom learned under a 'Month's Practice. This Part of the *Exerciſe* 'pleaſes the Spectators more than any other, as it 'diſcovers on a Sudden an infinite Number of Cu-'pids, Altars, Birds, Beaſts, Rainbows, and the 'like agreeable Figures, that diſplay themſelves to 'View, whilſt every one in the Regiment holds a 'Picture in her Hand.

'Upon my giving the Word to *diſcharge their 'Fans*, they give one general Crack that may be 'heard at a conſiderable Diſtance when the Wind 'ſits fair. This is one of the moſt difficult Parts 'of the *Exerci*[illegible] but I have ſeveral Ladies with 'me, who at their firſt Entrance could not give a 'Pop loud enough to be heard at the further End 'of a Room, who can now *diſcharge a Fan* in ſuch 'a Manner, that it ſhall make a Report like a 'Pocket-Piſtol. I have likewiſe taken Care (in 'order to hinder young Women from letting off 'their Fans in wrong Places or unſuitable Occaſi-'ons) to ſhew upon what Subject the Crack of a 'Fan may come in properly: I have likewiſe in-'vented a Fan, with which a Girl of Sixteen, by 'the Help of a little Wind which is incloſed about 'one of the largeſt Sticks, can make as loud a Crack 'as a Woman of Fifty with an ordinary Fan.

'When the Fans are thus *diſcharged*, the Word 'of Command in Courſe is to *ground their Fans*.

'This

‘ This teaches a Lady to quit her Fan gracefully ‘ when ſhe throws it aſide in order to take up a ‘ Pack of Cards, adjuſt a Curl of Hair, replace ‘ a falling Pin, or apply herſelf to any other Mat- ‘ ter of Importance. This Part of the *Exerciſe*, ‘ which only conſiſts in toſſing a Fan with an Air ‘ upon a long Table (which ſtands by for that Pur- ‘ poſe) may be learned in two Days Time as well ‘ as in a Twelvemonth.

‘ When my Female Regiment is thus diſarmed, ‘ I generally let them walk about the Room for ‘ ſome Time; when on a ſudden (like Ladies that ‘ look upon their Watches after a long Viſit) they ‘ all of them haſten to their Arms, catch them up ‘ in a Hurry, and place themſelves in their pro- ‘ per Stations upon my calling out *recover your* ‘ *Fans.* This Part of the *Exerciſe* is not difficult, ‘ provided a Woman applies her Thoughts to ‘ it.

‘ The *Fluttering of the Fan* is the laſt, and in- ‘ deed the Maſter-piece of the whole *Exerciſe*; but ‘ if a Lady does not miſpend her Time, ſhe may ‘ make herſelf Miſtreſs of it in three Months. ‘ I generally lay aſide the Dog-days and the hot ‘ Time of the Summer for the teaching this Part ‘ of the *Exerciſe*; for as ſoon as ever I pronounce ‘ *Flutter your Fans*, the Place is filled with ſo ma- ‘ ny Zephirs and gentle Breezes as are very re- ‘ freſhing in that Seaſon of the Year, though they ‘ might be dangerous to Ladies of a tender Con- ‘ ſtitution in any other.

‘ There is an infinite Variety of Motions to be ‘ made uſe of in the *Flutter of a Fan*: There is ‘ the angry Flutter, the modeſt Flutter, the timo- ‘ rous Flutter, the confuſed Flutter, the merry Flut- ‘ ter, and the amorous Flutter. Not to be tedious, ‘ there is ſcarce any Emotion in the Mind that does ‘ not produce a ſuitable Agitation in the Fan; in- ‘ ſomuch, that if I only ſee the Fan of a diſciplin'd ‘ Lady, I know very well whether ſhe laughs, ‘ frowns, or bluſhes. I have ſeen a Fan ſo very ‘ angry, that it would have been dangerous for ‘ the abſent Lover that provoked it to have come ‘ within the Wind of it; and at other Times ſo ‘ very languiſhing, that I have been glad for ‘ the Lady's Sake the Lover was at a ſufficient ‘ Diſtance from it. I need not add, that a Fan ‘ is either a Prude or Coquet, according to the Na- ‘ ture of the Perſon that bears it. To conclude ‘ my Letter, I muſt acquaint you that I have from ‘ my own Obſervations compiled a little Treatiſe ‘ for the Uſe of my Scholars, entituled, *The Paſſi-* ‘ *ons of the Fan*; which I will communicate to you, ‘ if you think it may be of Uſe to the Publick. ‘ I ſhall have a general Review on *Thurſday* next; ‘ to which you ſhall be very welcome if you will ‘ honour it with your Preſence.

I am, &c.

‘ P. S. I teach young Gentlemen the whole Art ‘ of Gallanting a Fan.

‘ N. B. I have ſeveral little plain Fans made for ‘ this Uſe, to avoid Expence.

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